



CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED RAIL AUTHORITY

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California High-Speed Rail Authority Forges Ahead While Adjusting Work Program to Fit Constricted Budget

Sacramento, CA – According to a statement by the California High-Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) today, the allocation of \$20.7 million in the 2007-08 state budget will maintain progress on the vital project but will restrict much of the engineering and design work that was slated to begin within the next year. The 2007-08 allocation is less than the Legislature's budget provision of nearly \$60 million.

"Despite the reduced funding for high-speed rail, I am very optimistic about our ability to sustain progress on this vital solution to California's transportation crisis," said The Honorable Quentin Kopp, Chairman of the Board of the Authority. "High-speed 220 mile per hour trains offer the only realistic and comprehensive strategy for alleviating gridlock and improving the ability of our citizens to move quickly and easily from one part of the state to another. Once built, high-speed trains will be an important transportation solution for California."

"The proposed \$20.7 million budget will keep some essential activities funded," said Mehdi Morshed, HSRA executive director. "The budget allows the Authority to complete the Bay Area program level environmental analysis and select a preferred route. With the anticipated \$3.5 million contribution from Orange County, this budget will keep the engineering and environmental work going in the LA-Anaheim corridor. And we will also continue the vital engineering and design work needed to receive the regulatory approvals to build the system.

"This project has great momentum and we will move the project forward responsibly and quickly so that voters can confidently approve the \$9.95 billion bond next year," said Morshed.

Judge Kopp said the high-speed train system has widespread support from state and federal legislators, as well as Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, who wrote an editorial in support of the project in the Fresno Bee earlier this year. Newspapers throughout California that have editorialized in support of budgeting appropriate funds to keep high-speed rail on schedule, includes the Fresno Bee, Los Angeles Times, Los Angeles Daily News, San Jose Mercury News, and San Francisco Chronicle.

Kopp also referenced California mayors who have lined up behind the project, including Antonio Villaraigosa (Los Angeles), Curt Pringle (Anaheim), Alan Autry (Fresno) and Gavin Newsom (San Francisco). The project has received strong support from U.S. Senators Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer, as well as bipartisan support from the majority of California's Congressional delegation, which recently signed a letter urging Governor Schwarzenegger and the California Senate to provide adequate funding to keep the high-speed train project on schedule. Other supporters include Los Angeles County Supervisor Mike Antonovich and Don Knabe, and Assembly Speaker Fabian Nunez and State Senate President Pro-Tem Don Perata.

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